

REMARKS

The allowance of claims 1-5 and 10-13 and the indication that claims 7-9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, is acknowledged.

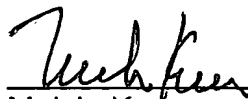
By the above amendment, dependent claims 7 and 8 which are objected to have been written in independent form. Since claim 9 depends from objected to claim 8 which has been written in independent form, applicants submit that by the present amendment, claims 7-9 should also now be in condition for allowance.

Further, claim 6, which stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Tomimatsu et al (6,538,254) and which is a patent by some of the inventors herein, has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereby obviating the aforementioned rejection.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants submit that all the claims remaining in this application have been indicated as being allowed or objected to and have placed in allowable form, such that all claims remaining in this application, i.e. claims 1-5 and 7-13, should now be in condition for allowance, and issuance of an action of a favorable nature is courteously solicited.

To the extent necessary, applicant's petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (500.42823X00) and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,



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